

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-9 and 14-19 are pending, with claims 10-13 and 20 canceled by this paper.

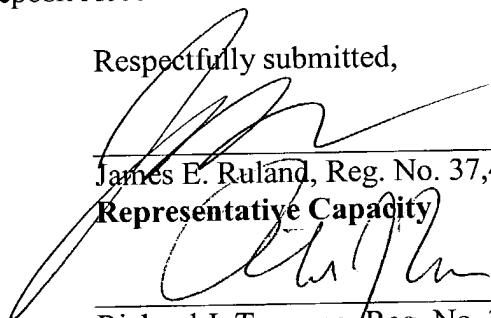
**Allowable Subject Matter**

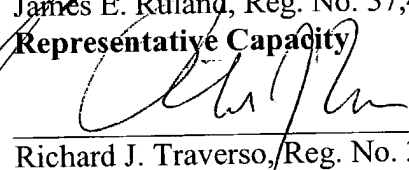
Applicants acknowledge that claims 1-9 and 14-19 are allowed. Consequently, applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and the cancellation of claims 10-13 and 20 should not be construed as acquiescence to any grounds of rejection.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration is courteously requested. If there are any remaining issues which can be expedited by a telephone conference, the examiner is courteously invited to telephone counsel at the number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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***PLEASE SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:***

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Attorney Docket No.: 9240 (NCRCO-95X)

Date: March 22, 2004